

President Fox was accorded a formal welcome with full military honors. In his remarks, he referred to Martha Sahagun de Fox, wife of President Fox. The transcript released by the Office of the Press Secretary

also included the remarks of President Fox. The Office of the Press Secretary also released a Spanish language transcript of these remarks.

## Remarks Following a Joint Cabinet Meeting With President Vicente Fox of Mexico September 5, 2001

*President Bush.* Mr. President, first, let me introduce you to many of the members of our press corps, which are fine Americans. [Laughter]

We have had an extraordinary meeting. Not only did the President and I meet in the Oval Office for a continuation of our frank discussions on very important issues that relate to our two countries; we then just had a joint Cabinet meeting. I suspect this is the first time there has been a joint Cabinet meeting between the Mexican Government and the United States Government—or the United States Government and any government, for that matter. And some of our Cabinet officials briefed the President and me on a variety of subjects: crime, agriculture, water issues, energy, migration, and foreign policy within the region.

What I came away with is that the spirit of cooperation has never been stronger, that not only do the President and I consider ourselves friends but our Cabinet officials have gotten to know each other on a personal basis. And the dialog is very important and very frank.

Our relationship with Mexico is an incredibly important relationship. It's one where there's a lot of opportunity, and it's a relationship where there are problems. And in order to deal with those problems and take advantage of those opportunities, it's important to have discussions at all levels in our government. And this is what we've begun.

Mr. President, I'm so honored you are here. This is the first state visit that I've had as the President, and I can't think of a better state visit and a better way to culminate the morning than to have had a frank discussion amongst the able team that you've put together and the able team that I've put together.

I'd be glad to have some of your comments, Mr. President.

*President Fox.* Thank you very much. I think there are a lot of expectations out of this visit, the state visit to the United States. We are very pleased and honored to be here, especially to witness the effort, the amount of jobs, the amount of work and meetings that have gone through since we last met in Mexico.

As was mentioned here, the *ambiente* is the correct *ambiente*; it is of a professionalism; it is a frank and open discussions; it is of productivity, this *ambiente* which we are living during the day.

It was mentioned here that today we have an everyday contact on most of the working teams that are doing this job behind the scene that we're seeing here. I'm very, very satisfied, where we have been reported today as the work that has been done in the last 6 months. And there is clear advantage on each of the subjects.

But more so, there is a clear advance on this philosophy of trust that we are building in, that we have built in the process, and that is the foundation of the actions, the deliberations, the discussions, and

the conclusions and decisions that are being taken all along through the process.

So to us, today we reaffirm that this friendship, this strong relationship that has been built between Mexico and the United States, is becoming now very productive. So we make—that this will come on flowing in this close future and keep advancing on each of the subjects that we have discussed.

Thank you.

*President Bush.* Thank you all very much.

NOTE: The President spoke at 12:33 p.m. in the Cabinet Room at the White House. President Fox spoke partly in Spanish, and those portions of his remarks were translated by an interpreter. A tape was not available for verification of the content of these remarks.

## Remarks at a State Dinner Honoring President Vicente Fox of Mexico September 5, 2001

It's my honor to offer a toast to the—our guests from Mexico. After I do so, President Fox will offer a toast, and then Cardinal Mahony of Los Angeles, California, will offer to bless the meal.

Mr. President and Mrs. Fox, on behalf of the American people, Laura and I welcome you to the United States and to the *Casa Blanca*. [*Laughter*]

This is not only a state dinner; it's like a family gathering. The most important ties between your country and mine, Mr. President, go beyond economics and politics and geography. They are the ties of heritage, culture, and family. This is true for millions of Mexican and American families, including my own.

The Mexican people have changed and enriched America. Together, our nations are now working to strengthen the Americas. A long border lies between us, but it does not divide us. Nearly one million people cross that border every day; a quarter-trillion dollars worth of trade crosses it every year. Because of the visionary NAFTA agreement of 1994, the trade between us crosses in ever greater freedom. That's a benefit to both our peoples and a model to the world.

A sound foreign policy begins by ensuring the safety and security of the neighborhood we share. A good neighborhood is

made by good neighbors. And good neighbors work as we are working, with shared obligations and mutual respect.

Mr. President, you and I are keeping the pledges we made in Guanajuato this past winter to expand the freedom of trade, to build an equitable prosperity, and to honor the rule of law.

We have before us a great prospect, an era of prosperity in a hemisphere of liberty. In this task, our cooperation is broad and unprecedented. Our sense of trust is strong, and it's growing.

A century and a half ago, another occupant of this house, Abraham Lincoln, paused in the darkest hour of this country's history to send a word of hope to Mexico. Lincoln knew how closely the fates of our two countries were linked. And he never lost faith in the character of our two people. In April of 1861, he directed his Secretary of State to tell Mexico of his high respect for the heroism of their people, and above all, their inextinguishable love of civil liberty.

My message to the Mexican people is the same. The respect of my Nation endures, and it deepens. The United States has no more important relationship in the world than our relationship with Mexico.